

§ 10. Lord Howe Island.

1. **Area, Location, etc.**—Between Norfolk Island and the Australian coast is Lord Howe Island in latitude $31^{\circ} 30'$ south; longitude $159^{\circ} 5'$ east. It was discovered in 1788. The total area is 3220 acres, the island being seven miles in length and from one half to one and three-quarter miles in width. It is distant 436 miles from Sydney. The flora is varied and the vegetation luxuriant, with shady forests, principally of palms and banyans. The highest point is Mount Gower, 2840 feet. The climate is mild and the rainfall abundant.

2. **Settlement.**—The first settlement was by a small Maori party in 1853; afterwards a colony was settled from Sydney. Constitutionally it is a dependency of New South Wales, and is supervised by a visiting magistrate.

3. **Population.**—The population at the Census of 3rd April, 1911, was 56 males, 49 females, total 105.

4. **Production, Trade, etc.**—The principal product is the seed of the native or *Kentia* palms. A monthly steamship service is maintained with Sydney. The lands belong to the Crown. The occupants pay no rent, and are tenants on sufferance.

§ 11. Some Native Australian Fodder Plants.

In Year Book No. 6, p. 1190, will be found an article on "Some Native Australian Fodder Plants," by J. H. Maiden, Esq., F.L.S., Director of the Botanic Gardens, Sydney. It is not intended to reproduce the article in the present issue of the Year Book.

§ 12. Interstate Conferences.

1. **Premiers' Conference, 1914.**—In March, 1914, a conference of State Premiers was held in Melbourne, at which a number of matters of interstate interest were discussed. On the subjects of Uniform Railway Gauge, Electoral Uniformity, and other questions affecting both Commonwealth and States, the Commonwealth was represented at the Conference by the Prime Minister and other Members of the Commonwealth Cabinet. The following is a summary of the resolutions agreed to:—

Dominions Housing. Resolved: That this Conference approves of the proposal to provide accommodation for the housing of the Oversea Dominions upon the Aldwych site in London.

British Science Association (Railway Passes and Hospitality generally). Resolved: That, in the opinion of this Conference, the amended proposals of the Commonwealth relating to the British Science Association should be concurred in by the States.

Uniform Standards for Foods and Drugs. Resolved: That, in the opinion of this Conference, uniform legislation or regulation in pursuance of the decision of the Conference of June, 1913, on Uniform Standards for Foods and Drugs, should be approved by each State as early as practicable.

Panama Exposition—Representation at. Resolved: That this Conference approves the representation of Australia at the Panama Exposition, and urges the co-operating States to forthwith appoint their Commissioners.

Uniform Railway Gauge. Resolved: That the States agree to refer to the Interstate Commission the question of a uniform railway gauge for Australia for report whether it is desirable to adopt a uniform railway gauge; and, if so, when and what gauge should be adopted.

And, further, that the Commonwealth and the States agree to refer to the said Commission the following questions:—

1. What benefits will result—(a) to the Commonwealth; (b) to each of the States?
2. What will be the cost of the conversion?
3. In what manner and to whom shall such cost be apportioned?

Transferred Properties Questions—(A) Payment by Commonwealth for Services rendered by States. Resolved: That this Conference affirms the principle that services rendered to the Commonwealth by the States, and *vice versa*, should be paid for.

Transferred Properties Questions—Payment of Interest on Transferred Properties from the Date of such Transfer to the Commonwealth. Resolved: That this question be referred to a Committee of the legal members of the Conference for consideration and subsequent report to the Conference.

Resolved: That, whilst the Conference considers that on a strict interpretation of section 89 of the Constitution Act, under which the Commonwealth is apparently acting, the Queensland Government is unable to effectively assert a claim for interest for the period prior to the commencement of the present financial arrangements, it feels that the claim is worthy of favorable consideration.

Transferred Properties Questions—Payment of Capital Money for Transferred Properties. Resolved: That arrangements for the settlement of the capital debt on transferred properties should be made without delay by the Commonwealth to the States.

Transferred Properties Questions—Re-transfer of Properties from the Commonwealth. Resolved: That, in the opinion of this Conference, the re-transfer of properties transferred under section 85 of the Constitution should not be accepted by the States, except by mutual agreement between the States and the Commonwealth.

States Savings Banks in relation to the Commonwealth Savings Bank. Resolved: That, in order to terminate the disadvantages arising from the competition between the States Savings Banks and the Commonwealth Savings Bank, and secure the advantages which will follow upon an increased recognition of the national character of the Commonwealth Bank, it is resolved that in consideration of the Commonwealth Bank withdrawing from the Savings Bank business the States are willing to allow the Savings Bank deposits now held by the Commonwealth Bank to remain on fixed deposit with the Commonwealth Bank, and to become responsible, through their Savings Banks or otherwise, for the repayment of such deposits, and will further undertake at their earliest convenience and as far as practicable to transact their State banking business with the Commonwealth Bank.

Resolved: That, with a view to the early completion of such an agreement, the State Treasurers should confer with the Commonwealth Treasurer as early as possible.

Relation of Commonwealth to Immigration; and Assistance that may be arranged with the States. Resolved: That the various immigration questions on the agenda paper be referred to the available immigration experts of the States for consideration and subsequent report to the Conference.

Electoral Uniformity between the Commonwealth and States. Resolved: That the proposals of the Commonwealth Government relating to electoral uniformity be referred to the Governments of the States for early consideration and decision.

State Debts—Transfer of. Motion: That this Conference declares its readiness to co-operate with the Government of the Commonwealth in effecting an early transfer of the debts of the States, upon the conditions suggested by the Federal Treasurer, with the following amendments, viz.:—

1. That the entire control and management of future conversion and new loan transactions of the Commonwealth and the States be placed in the hands of a National Debts Commission of five members, two appointed by the Commonwealth, and three by the States; and
2. That existing sinking or redemption funds be not transferred to the Commonwealth.

Resolved: That the debate on this motion be adjourned, and that the proposals referred to therein be referred to a Treasurers' Conference.

Ocean Lights and Marine Marks in Australia. Resolved: That the proposals of the Commonwealth Government relating to ocean lights and light dues be referred for the early and serious consideration of the respective Governments of the States.

Gold Coinage—Assumption of Control by Commonwealth. Resolved: That this Conference approves of taking over the Mint and of gold coinage by the Commonwealth—the States of New South Wales and Victoria to compensate, on an equitable basis, the State of Western Australia.

Opening up another English Port. Resolved: That the States as a whole cannot agree at this stage. It is suggested that the matter be further considered by New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia.

Resolved: That the States co-operate in the endeavour to establish new services with the Eastern ports of the United States of America, and that all necessary inquiries be made to this end.

Issue of Passes to Officers accompanying Ministers. Resolved: That Ministers visiting other States on public business at other than Conference times to be entitled to pass one public officer over the railways free of charge, and during Conference times officers accompanying Ministers to receive passes.

Railway Passes to Delegates to Conferences of the Blind. Resolved: That the States approve of the issue of passes for four (4) representatives of each State for annual conferences.

Bulk Handling of Grain. Decided that the question of bulk handling of grain cannot be the subject of a resolution.

Representation of the Commonwealth at the Royal Scottish Arboricultural Society's Diamond Jubilee. Resolved: That the States do not desire to be represented at the Scottish Arboricultural Diamond Jubilee, to be held in June, 1914.

International Exhibitions. Resolved: That the Convention recommendations be approved.

Uniform Valuations for State, Municipal, and Commonwealth purposes. Resolved: That the Conference affirms the desirability of uniform valuations for Commonwealth and State purposes being adopted as early as practicable, and that the necessary legislative or administrative steps in that direction be taken by the States.

Border Migration. Resolved: That, in the opinion of this Conference, the New South Wales and Victorian Governments should be urged to continue existing arrangements for the checking of border migration at Albury.

Imperial Timber Bureau in London—Establishment of. Resolved: That, in the opinion of this Conference, the time is not ripe for concerted action in connexion with the proposed Imperial Timber Bureau in London.

Quinquennial Census. Resolved: (1) That, in the opinion of this Conference, the Government of the Commonwealth should be urged to take, in the year 1916, an interim census limited to name, locality, and sex, as recommended by the conference of State Statisticians.

(2) That the attention of the Prime Minister be drawn to the estimate furnished by the New South Wales Statistician of the cost of such a census, viz., £65,000 approximately.

Interstate Trade Statistics. Resolved: That, in the opinion of this Conference, the Commonwealth Government should be urged to resume the collection of statistics of interstate trade.

Railway Passes to ex-Ministers of Commonwealth. Resolved: That, in the opinion of this Conference, the granting of passes to ex-Ministers of the Commonwealth should be made the subject of arrangement between the Commonwealth Government and the States in each individual case as it arises.

Present System of Issuing Railway Passes to Wives of Members of Parliament. Resolved: That, in the opinion of this Conference, the issue of free passes in favour of the wives of members of other State Parliaments should cover sleeping-berth accommodation.

Recommendations of Conference of State Commissioners of Taxation. Resolved: That the Conference cannot see its way to finally deal with the recommendations of the Interstate Commissioners of Taxation in respect of double payment of income tax, but recommends the matter to a conference of State Treasurers to be held before the assembling of the next Premiers' Conference.

Precedence of British Naval Officers (case of Admiral Patey). Resolved: That, in the opinion of this Conference, the matter of precedence to be granted to British naval officers commanding on the Australian station is one to be determined by His Majesty's representatives in each individual State.

Uniform Company Law. Resolved: That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is desirable there should be a uniform Company Law throughout the Commonwealth, and that this law should follow the English Companies Act as far as practicable.

The Attorney-General of New South Wales to forthwith prepare a Bill for submission to the Attorneys-General of each State, with a view to its early enactment in each of the States.

American Meat Trust. Resolved: That the States respectively continue inquiries into the alleged existence and effects of a Meat Combine in Australia, and also continue to consult together and interchange information thereon, and, if necessary, take combined legislative action to regulate the operations of the alleged and similar trusts.

Jewellery—Hall Marking of. Resolved: That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is desirable that the States should make proper provision for the hall-marking of gold and silver jewellery by uniform legislation in each of the States.

The Attorney-General of South Australia to forthwith prepare a Bill for submission to the Attorney-General of each State, with a view to its early enactment in each of the States.

Gold Buyers—Uniform Legislation re. Resolved: That it is desirable there should be uniform legislation with regard to the purchase and sale of gold, silver, and precious stones throughout the Commonwealth, and that such legislation should follow the Acts of Western Australia and Victoria.

The Attorney-General of Victoria to forthwith prepare a Bill for submission to the Attorneys-General of each State with a view to its early enactment by each of the States.

Compulsory Acquisition of Crown Lands by Commonwealth. Resolved: That the States object to the exercise of compulsory powers for the acquisition by the Commonwealth from the States of Crown lands.

Footwear Regulation. Resolved: That it is desirable there should be uniform legislation with regard to the manufacture and sale of footwear throughout the Commonwealth, and that the Law Officers of New South Wales and Victoria consult together and prepare a Bill to regulate such manufacture and sale for submission to the Parliaments of all the States. The conduct of such matter to be with New South Wales.

Double Probate Duties. Resolved: That this Conference is of opinion that double probate or succession duties should not be charged upon the estates of the deceased persons, and that the Commissioners of Taxes be requested to complete their inquiries with regard to the principles on which personal property is assessable to death duty. On completion of such inquiries it be left to the Attorney-General of Queensland to prepare and circulate suggested legislation for introduction in the various State Parliaments.

Interchange of Powers and Reciprocal Assistance by Masters-in-Lunacy of the several States. Resolved: That the several States pass legislation whereby the Lunacy Authority in the State in which a lunatic has property be empowered, at the request of the Lunacy Authority of a State in which the lunatic is confined, to deal with such property.

Consular Appointments. Resolved: That the practice in regard to the Consular appointments in the States which obtained, prior to 1911, under which the State Ministry took full responsibility in connexion with these appointments, be adhered to.

Relation of Commonwealth to Immigration; and Assistance that may be arranged with the States. Resolved: That this Conference has received with gratification the intimation made by the Commonwealth Government of its readiness to contribute a sum of £150,000 per annum to further the interests of immigration. Having regard to the various matters of policy, which will require to be considered in detail, the Conference agrees that the matter should form the subject of correspondence between the States, initiated by the Premier of New South Wales, as to the lines which should be adopted to allocate a definite function to the Commonwealth, as desired by the Prime Minister.

Medical Inspection of Immigrants. Resolved: That this Conference is of opinion that the regulations relating to the medical inspection under the Immigration Acts 1901-12, as proposed by the Commonwealth Government, will operate to impede the work of recruiting immigrants in Great Britain and elsewhere, and strongly urges that they should be modified in the directions which have been recommended by the Agents-General in consultation with States' emigration representatives in England; with the additional safeguard of a more rigorous examination of passengers at the port of embarkation by medical referees, to be appointed by the Commonwealth Health Bureau in Great Britain.

Duty on Imported Superphosphates. Resolved: That, whilst sympathising with the views of the South Australian representatives, this Conference feels that the question raised is one purely for the consideration of the Federal Parliament.

Treasurers' Conference—Date of Meeting. Resolved: That the convening of a conference of State Treasurers as early as possible be entrusted to the Premier of New South Wales.

2. Murray River Waters Conference.—On the occasion of the Premiers' Conference referred to above, the Premiers of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, together with the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, entered into the following agreement relative to the Murray River Waters. (See also p. 510.)

Resolutions agreed to by the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia and the Premiers of the States of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia:— With a view to the economical use of waters of the River Murray and its tributaries, for irrigation and navigation, and to the reconciling of the interest of the Commonwealth and the riparian States, it is resolved that an agreement between the Commonwealth and States of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia (herein called "this Agreement") be entered into, providing:—

(i.) That a system of storages be provided at Cumberoona or some other suitable site on the Upper Murray and at Lake Victoria, and that weirs and locks be constructed in the course of the River Murray from its mouth to Echuca; in the River Murrumbidgee from its junction with the River Murray to Hay, or alternatively to works in the River Murrumbidgee, an equivalent extent of weirs and locks in the River Darling, extending upstream from its junction with the River Murray.

(ii.) That the cost of the undermentioned works required to give effect to Resolution (i.), and estimated as follows:—

Nine weirs and locks from Blanchetown to Wentworth	...	£865,000
Seventeen weirs and locks from Wentworth to Echuca	...	1,700,000
Nine weirs and locks from the junction of the Rivers Murray and Murrumbidgee to Hay, or alternately an equivalent amount (£540,000) in locks and weirs from the junction of the River Darling with the River Murray upstream	...	540,000
Upper Murray storage	1,353,000
Lake Victoria storage	205,000
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		£4,663,000
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